



Washington State Legislature

Delivered Via Electronic Mail

August 16, 2021

The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington
The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Suzan DelBene, U.S. Representative, 1st District
The Honorable Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative, 2nd District
The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Representative, 3rd District
The Honorable Dan Newhouse, U.S. Representative, 4th District
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative, 5th District
The Honorable Derek Kilmer, U.S. Representative, 6th District
The Honorable Pramila Jayapal, U.S. Representative, 7th District
The Honorable Kim Schrier, U.S. Representative, 8th District
The Honorable Adam Smith, U.S. Representative, 9th District
The Honorable Marilyn Strickland, U.S. Representative, 10th District
The Honorable Andy Billig, Senate Majority Leader, 3rd District
The Honorable Laurie Jenkins, Speaker of the House, 27th District

Dear Governor Inslee, members of the Washington congressional delegation, and fellow legislators:

The events of the past 48 hours have made it clear that our nation is at a crossroads. Our response will be the basis on which we are judged by history.

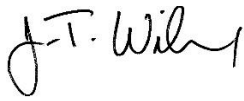
The shocking and sudden collapse of the Afghan government promises to bring about renewed oppression for ordinary Afghans and a tragic dashing of hope for women and girls across the country. Images of Afghan civilians clinging to U.S. aircraft in a desperate bid for freedom will forever be seared into our national conscience.

This crisis requires us to assess what we can do here in Washington state to help. Thousands of Washington veterans have poured their hearts and sometimes blood into protecting the people of Afghanistan over the past two decades. Having communicated with these brave men and women, we are struck by the warmth and compassion they feel for the Afghans who stood up to assist them during their service overseas, including the many, many interpreters. By helping the Afghan people escape the Taliban, we can do more than express our solemn gratitude to our veterans here in Washington state. We can show them that their service was not in vain.

We are confident in our ability as a state to take bold action because we have done it before. Under the leadership of Governor Dan Evans, Washington was one of the first states to accept refugees after the fall of Saigon. We have seen the tremendous generational benefit of welcoming political refugees to our state and providing them with the precious gift of freedom.

We call on leaders at all levels of state and national government to act swiftly and coordinate with refugee resettlement agencies to ensure duly vetted Afghan refugees can be welcomed here with open arms in Washington state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.T. Wilcox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Rep. J.T. Wilcox
House Republican Leader
2nd Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Braun". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Sen. John Braun
Senate Republican Leader
20th Legislative District